



GWINNETT COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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AGENDA PACKET

TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 13, 2026

**Tree Advisory Committee Meeting
April 13, 2026**

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**Tree Advisory Committee Meeting
April 13, 2026**

1. TAC April 13, 2026 Meeting Agenda

Gwinnett County Tree Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda **Monday, April 13, 2026, at 6:00pm**

Innovation Square
446 West Crogan Street, 1st floor, Conference Room 108
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

1. Call to Order
2. Determination of a Quorum (5 Members)
3. Announcements
4. Adoption of the Agenda
5. Approval of the Minutes
 - a. March 2, 2026
6. Old Business
7. New Business
 - a. Front Yard Tree Program
 - b. Tree Ordinance Rewrite
 - c. Priorities and Potential Committees
 - Kudzo Eradication
 - Cross-Department Tree Review Process
 - Potential GCPS Partnerships
 - d. Gwinnett County Email Addresses
8. Other Business
 - a. Staff Report
9. Adjournment

**Tree Advisory Committee Meeting
April 13, 2026**

2. TAC March 2, 2026 Unofficial Meeting Minutes

**Tree Advisory Committee Minutes
Monday, March 2, 2026, at 6:00pm**

Innovation Square
446 West Crogan Street, 1st floor, Conference Room 106
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Present: Chris Adkins, David Argo, Farid Ghalili, Kate Pittman, Steve Sappington, Traci Leath

Absent: Nicola McIntyre, Patrick Carey

Staff: Rinda Grooms, Sharon Cook, James Hornbeck, Roxanne Raven, Calvin Kom

A. Call to Order

6:04pm

B. Determination of a quorum

A quorum was present.

C. Announcements

- a. Roxanne Raven has begun working for the County as Development Division Special Projects Coordinator. Her position as the Chairwoman's appointment has been vacated, and staff are working on recommendations to fill in the seat.

D. Adoption of the Agenda

{Motion to Approve: Farid Ghalili; Second: Steve Sappington; Vote: 6-0: Chris Adkins-Yes; David Argo-Yes; Farid Ghalili-Yes; Kate Pittman-Yes; Steve Sappington-Yes; Traci Leath-Yes}

E. Approval of the Minutes – November 3, 2025

{Motion to Approve: Steve Sappington; Second: Farid Ghalili; Vote: 6-0: Chris Adkins-Yes; David Argo-Yes; Farid Ghalili-Yes; Kate Pittman-Yes; Steve Sappington-Yes; Traci Leath-Yes}

F. Old Business

None

G. New Business

- a. Tree Ordinance Amendment Update – Rinda Grooms, Development Division Director shared that the update is still in process. The final community outreach has been postponed. Once Director Matt Dickison and Deputy Director Chris Hayward have reviewed the draft, it will be shared with the TAC for review.

- b. Front Yard Tree Program Update – James Hornbeck, Development Plan Review Manager shared that the application portal has now closed after receiving 700 applications since January. Purchasing is in the process of awarding the contract while the internal team reviews applications. Thus far, 300 applications have been reviewed, with 160 approved. To ensure as many applicants receive trees as possible, each applicant will be given one tree instead of two.

In response to questions from the committee, James clarified that the process would allow awardees their choice of tree considering availability, and that those not accepted would receive notice via email from the County.

The committee was pleased with the interest in the program and requested further data on the applicant locations and tree types for the next meeting.

- c. TAC Priorities for the Year – Rinda asked the committee to share ideas for the direction of the committee’s work this year. Rinda reviewed the committee’s purpose and previous projects as a starting point for discussion.
- Steve Sappington recommended assessing Kudzu eradication programs in relation to preserving tree health.
 - Kate Pittman recommended improving partnerships and providing general education with other County departments to improve tree removal and replanting processes.
 - Farid Ghalili recommended looking into planting and education partnerships with Gwinnett County Public Schools.

Rinda shared that staff will investigate these further and bring them back to the next meeting to discuss forming subcommittees.

The discussion then shifted to meeting cadence. The committee agreed that the current meeting schedule worked well, but they wished to discuss it again at the April meeting when the status of the Tree Ordinance Rewrite will be updated.

H. Other Business

- a. Staff Report – Rinda highlighted the new action items. The committee agreed older items on the staff report could be removed, and the document could be shared less frequently.

I. Adjournment

6:45pm

{Motion to Approve: Chris Adkins; Second: Farid Ghalili; Vote: 6-0: Chris Adkins-Yes; David Argo-Yes; Farid Ghalili-Yes; Kate Pittman-Yes; Steve Sappington-Yes; Traci Leath-Yes}

**Tree Advisory Committee Meeting
April 13, 2026**

3. TAC March 2, 2026 Meeting Notes

Gwinnett County Tree Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

March 2, 2026, at 6:04pm

Committee Members Present: Chris Adkins, David Argo, Farid Ghalili, Traci Leath, Kate Pittman, Nicola McIntyre, Steve Sappington

Committee Members Absent: Patrick Carey

Staff Present: Rinda Grooms, Sharon Cook, James Hornbeck, Roxanne Raven, and Calvin Kom

Announcements:

- a. Rinda announced that Roxanne has joined the county as Special Project Coordinator

Old Business:

None

New Business

- a. Tree Ordinance Amendment Update – Rinda Grooms
Rinda gave an update on the Tree ordinance rewrite

- b. Front Yard Tree Program Update – James Hornbeck
James gave an update on the FYTP 700 applicant. Purchasing in the process of awarding a contract. The internal team is reviewing applications. Of the 300 applications reviewed, we have approved 160 applications.
We are going to give 1 tree per candidate instead of 2.

- c. Rinda explained what we are looking to see if the members have different ideas or type of focus, programs, or directions they want the committee to go in. Other items we are looking at switching back from every-other-month to quarterly.
 - Ideas included Kudzu eradication, working with other departments like DWR or GC DOT on tree maintenance policies, and partnering with GCPS.
 - Rinda asked if we could take this meeting back to quarterly. The committee said yes, as we do not have any special projects the committee is currently working on. At the next meeting, we can discuss potential subcommittees.
 - Chris asked when the next meeting will be. Roxanne answered that it would be in April, July, and October.

Other Business

- a. Staff Report
Rinda presented the Staff Report.

Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Note: These meeting notes do not represent official meeting minutes of the TAC. They are for internal record keeping purposes only.

**Tree Advisory Committee Meeting
April 13, 2026**

4. TAC March 23, 2026 Staff Report

Item No.	Topic	Status Date	Comments
1	Train New Board Members with TAC Orientation	1/24/2025 6/18/2025 12/18/2025 02/23/26	1/24/2025: Orientation took place with Nicola McIntyre. 6/26/2025: Orientation took place with Traci Leath. 01/13/26: Orientation took place with Farid Ghalili 02/24/26: Orientation took place with David Argo. 02/24/26: Orientation took place with Kate Pittman. 02/27/26: Orientation scheduled for Chris Adkins.
2	Request for Offers (RFO) in response to the Request for Proposal (RFP) to rewrite the tree ordinance sections of the UDO. Proposals reviewed. Board of Commissioners Vote.	2/16/2024 3/26/2024 4/16/2024 6/18/2024	2/14/2024: Advertisement of RFO 2/21/2024: Advertisement of RFO 2/27/2024: Pre-Preposal Meeting 3/11/2024: Kick-off Meeting 3/26/2024: Scoring Meeting 5/19/2024: Staff Recommendation Letter Due 6/4/2024: Recommendation Letter considered by BOC at Business Session. Moved to 6/18/2024. 6/18/2024: Board of Commissioners approved CPL Architects, Engineers, Landscape Architect and Surveyor D.P.C. (P.C.) as the consultant firm for the Tree Ordinance Rewrite Project.
3	Front Yard Tree Program	2/1/2024 - 3/1/2026	Program initiated → subcommittee formed → strategy + TAC presentations → shifted from RFP to price agreement → coordination with GIS/IT/Comms → application developed, tested, and launched → vendor selected
		3/23/2026	Applications have been reviewed and the planting is being scheduled.
4	Rewrite Tree Ordinance sections of the UDO	10/1/2024 - 2/1/2026	Public engagement + survey conducted → canopy assessment and research completed → stakeholder interviews and community events held → draft ordinance + species list developed and iterated → technical reviews ongoing → Final outreach pending.
		3/23/2026	Drafts currently under review by P&D Upper Leadership
5	Revise TAC Creation Resolution to expand the position criteria to include a certified arborist in addition to the registered forester member representative	10/16/2025	TAC Re-Establishment Creation Resolution was adopted November 4, 2025 by the Board of Commissioners.

Item No.	Topic	Status Date	Comments
6	New Representative to Development Advisory Committee	12/18/2025	Patrick Carey, the TAC nomination, was approved by the Board of Commissioners to serve as the TAC Representative to the DAC on November 18, 2025.
7	2026 TAC Leadership	2/9/2026	Chris Adkins was nominated to serve as TAC Chairman and was unanimously approved on 01/05/26. Farid Ghalili was nominated to serve as TAC Vice-Chairman and was unanimously approved on 01/05/2026.